

## Army Chief of Staff Combat Training Center Future Vision

*Since combat developments and doctrine are dynamic, since weapon systems are constantly evolving, and since tactics and techniques are continually changing, training methods must change apace.*

FM 100-5, 1976

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Army's Combat Training Centers (CTCs) is to develop leaders. Their mission, according to Army doctrine, is to provide highly realistic and stressful combined arms training that approximates actual combat. Today's CTCs provide tough, realistic, multiecheloned, and fully integrated training for soldiers, leaders, and units. They produce bold, innovative leaders to deal with complex situations, flexible soldiers with the warrior ethos, and well-trained units. The CTCs of the 21st century must continue to achieve these results across the full spectrum of conflict. The history of the CTC program and the nature of future threats attest to the importance the Army must continually place on training the nation's soldiers.

Created in 1973, the Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC, brought responsibility for training to a new generation of senior officers who had, since early in their careers, trained on the combat training center ranges in NATO Europe. Built to train the German Wehrmacht in the 1930's and 1940's, some ranges salvaged from post-World War II demilitarization programs were used by their new owners to train US and UK NATO units, and newly formed Bundeswehr units. TRADOC's trainers sought similar ranges in the US with a technically advanced exchange scoring system better than that used on German ranges.

In 1976 the TRADOC Deputy Chief of Staff for Training (DCST) proposed emulating the US Air Force's Red Flag air-to-air combat program, established in 1975. Red Flag recreated the geography and projected battlefield of eastern Germany in the desert of Nellis Air Force base in Nevada. The TRADOC DCST recommended creating an Army Red Flag or Combined Arms Training Center by uprooting tactical forces from their garrisons, flying them to a place remote from normal peacetime pursuits, and having them experience combat as closely as modern technology and ingenuity would permit.

TRADOC's chief of armor focused the search for a suitable maneuver area for armored forces on the Mojave Desert area surrounding Fort Irwin, California. This search for an improved scoring system led to developing a laser-based exchange system interconnected by an instrumentation system already in use at several test ranges. These basic ingredients—area and a sophisticated exchange evaluation system—made the National Training Center at Fort Irwin the first US-based CTC. Similar centers for training combined arms units followed. These training centers provide improved unit-training capability and a new performance-oriented training strategy that has served the Army for 20 years.

From the beginning of the Cold War, the Army trained to defeat a numerically superior, echeloned adversary. However, the Army no longer confronts a monolithic Soviet threat. Today's Army leaders face the operational environment of the 21st century, brought about by the changing world order. The tense but stable bipolar struggle of the Cold War transitions to a multitude of regional conflicts involving both states and revolutionary movements. This international disorder results in US forces performing an ever-increasing number of stability and support actions as part of a joint or combined force, capable of reversing the conditions of human suffering rapidly and resolving conflicts decisively. Often, mission complexity and cost require the US to act with partners in multinational coalitions. All estimates predict this trend will continue to include operations where the Army operates in a supporting rather than supported role.

This situation means that Army leaders and units must accomplish difficult missions in varied and complex conditions—full-spectrum warfare. In addition to the stress and uncertainty normally present in military actions, the new operational environment exposes commanders to variables such as terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, ambiguous military and political situations, nongovernmental and private volunteer organizations (NGOs/PVOs), media agencies, criminal organizations, civilians on the battlefield, urban and other complex terrain, and information operations. These and other factors will be present in both contingency actions and major theater wars; only the prominence of each will differ.

The character of the threat is changing and a new operational paradigm is emerging. Information-age technologies and digitization are affecting how the Army and its adversaries approach warfare. America's present and potential adversaries realize they cannot match the best-trained army in the world equipped with superior technology. Many are seeking to achieve their goals by using asymmetric means to offset the technology and combined arms advantages US forces bring to a symmetric force-on-force fight. They will also take advantage of increasingly global access to information to counter US information dominance. Opponents will seek to redefine the environment and create advantageous asymmetrical conditions by quickly changing the nature of the conflict and moving to employ a capability for which we are least prepared. This paradigm also states our foes will operate in complex terrain and urban environments to lessen US stand-off and long-range precision fires, since the majority of the world's population is increasingly concentrated in urban areas of political, economic, and social power. In addition, they must deny or limit regional access, attack US information systems, and dictate the tempo of the environment. Finally, adversaries can not allow US sanctuary at home or within the region. As in 1976, the Army faces a new training challenge: determining how best to train its soldiers for military actions in the 21st century. It must prepare soldiers, leaders, and units to rapidly adapt to complex situations across the full spectrum of operations, to fight when necessary, and to win decisively. To do this, Army forces must have the mental and physical agility to move between stability and support operations to warfighting and back again, just as they demonstrate the tactical agility to task organize on the move.

The CTC program is key to this effort. A CTC experience is the closest thing to combat the Army's soldiers, leaders, staffs, and units ever experience. It is a battlefield where soldiers can die, come back to life, correct their mistakes, and fight again. As the world order, operational environment, character of military actions, and unit capabilities change, the CTCs must remain relevant; they must train soldiers and units for situations and missions they will face tomorrow. To sustain their relevancy, it is time to chart a new vision for the future of the program. Part of this vision includes sustaining existing training standards, including modernization to keep pace with changes in the force and environment. Additionally, the Army must look at harnessing the role of the CTCs in developing doctrine and collecting data so it can maximize their potential and draw the right conclusions from lessons learned in a training environment.

As the Army moves into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, four primary combat training centers comprise the CTC program: National Training Center (NTC), Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC), and the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). Although the terrain at each center is different, the Army must blur the distinction between its light and heavy orientations while maintaining a focus on offense, defense, and stability operations. Additionally, it must provide a CTC-like experience for US combat forces in Korea.

### ***METHODS***

The CTC vision derives from the Army training strategy: it supports achieving the 2010 training end state of a networked organization engineered to meet institutional, unit, and modernization training needs. CTC training will—

- Focus on wartime METL and combat operations.
- Stress realistic, sustained, multiecheloned, and fully integrated training at all levels—combat, combat support, and combat service support.
- Focus on performance-oriented training in a realistic tactical environment (live, virtual, and/or constructive) measured against established task, conditions, and standards.
- Support achieving and sustaining training readiness using a combination of live, virtual, and constructive simulations and simulators.
- Validate training proficiency through live-fire exercises (both lethal and nonlethal) tailored to the operational environment from platoon to brigade level.
- Include instrumented urban operations training experience during every rotation.
- Incorporate reception, staging, onward movement, and integration (RSO&I) operations, regeneration, and deployment training.

This vision supports multidimensional training centers leveraging technology to prepare the best army in the world for full-spectrum joint and multinational operations to maintain the qualitative edge in warfighting and preserve the warrior ethos during a period of strategic transition. Under this vision, the CTCs

contribute to achieving Joint Vision 2010, Army Vision, and Army Transformation Strategy goals by providing a synthetic, joint battlefield environment in which a capabilities-based Army trains to achieve advanced, full-spectrum dominance throughout the operational and tactical levels of warfare.

**Centers of Excellence.** Each CTC will be a Center of Excellence with a specific warfighting focus across the spectrum of conflict. BCTP will focus between the major theater war (MTW) and major regional crisis (MRC) levels. NTC will focus at the MRC level. CMTC will focus between the MRC and small-scale contingency (SSC) levels. JRTC will focus at the SSC level. The Army cannot afford a full-spectrum focus at each CTC. However, the threat portrayed will be asymmetrical and optimized for its specific CTC focus. One OPFOR will not fit all.

**Units.** The Army's goal is for active component division and corps commanders to execute a BCTP exercise during their first year in command, while making every effort to get battalion or brigade commanders a maneuver CTC rotation as early as possible in their command. The goal for Army National Guard enhanced separate brigades is to have a maneuver CTC experience every seven to eight years, a Brigade Command and Battle Staff Program (BCBST) experience every two years, and a BCTP experience at division level when preparing for operational commitments. Brigades in Korea will also receive a BCBST every two years. Maneuver CTCs will retain a brigade scope and continue to focus at the battalion level. The BCTP focuses at the corps, division, and brigade levels. The BCTP will enhance active component brigade commander and staff learning experiences during division-level exercises. The goal is to use the brigade BCTP experience as a staff exercise to prepare a unit for its live CTC rotation. Additionally, the Army will explore strategies to improve and extend the CTC experience, to include—

- Enhancing BLUFOR Army National Guard divisional brigade participation through division teaming.
- Providing a CTC experience to corps level and selective reserve component (RC) echelon above division (EAD) assets such as aviation, air/missile defense, field artillery, engineer, military intelligence, combat support hospitals, and other combat service and combat service support units.
- Providing a degree of priority to active component brigades stationed apart from their division headquarters.
- Providing blue and red an equal opportunity to win in BCTP warfighters.
- Ensuring Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) units receive priority for BCTP warfighters.
- Including interagency play in all division-level and above exercises.
- Defining the role of intelligence in stability and support operations and allowing commanders to integrate the full range of intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance assets available now and in the future.

- Integrating and enhancing language training.
- Incorporating OPFOR and BLUFOR space-based capabilities and information technology.

**Operations Group.** The operations groups manned by highly dedicated and qualified observer controller/trainers (OC/Ts) are the foundation of the CTC program. Qualified OCs who know how to conduct an analysis of a unit and leaders' performance while facilitating a meaningful after-action review (AAR) are the success of the CTCs. AARs make the US Army different from all others. AARs must reinforce Army doctrinal standards and leverage the learning opportunities presented by underscoring strengths and weaknesses demonstrated during the exercise. Commanders should have the opportunity to lead an AAR during the rotation, especially at times when planning and preparation are not going well. OC manning continues to be a challenge, but as the Army moves into the 21<sup>st</sup> century it needs to find creative ways to organize each operations group to maximize its potential, such as including representation from the new Army functional areas. Modernization is another area of concern. Operations group headquarters that replicate higher divisional headquarters and OC teams require modernization to operate with digital units and communication capabilities to pass information unimpeded by diminishing frequency spectrum. It is imperative that these tactical experts spread their experiences across the Army. The Army must draw from these experiences to impact all doctrine, training, leader development, organization, materiel, and soldiers (DTLOMS) domains, aid in trend reversal, and infuse its schools with their knowledge.

**Opposing Force.** The OPFOR must remain the best-trained adversary force in the world and provide a relevant experience at all CTCs. The CTC OPFOR should provide the toughest, most challenging fight short of war for rotational units. To be credible, it must reflect the 21st century operational environment and be equipped to replicate capabilities forces may face on future battlefields. The OPFOR will be full-spectrum capable, opportunities based, adaptive, and fully able to employ asymmetrical tactics including attacking or employing modern information systems to achieve its objectives. The OPFOR will not be locked into a rigid application of an overly prescriptive doctrine. It will be a learning OPFOR. To meet these goals, it must have the systems, tactics, and manning to provide a realistic fight and be a challenging opponent. Modernization should include viable OPFOR surrogate vehicle systems, an air threat both manned and unmanned, an ability to employ information operations, and asymmetric capabilities. Scenarios should feature a set of variables that logically blend and support training objectives. Similar scenarios will reduce training OPTEMPO by allowing units to focus on a single OPFOR order of battle that supports the unit's mission essential task list (METL).

To counter the Army's advantages in technology and maximize its combat power, adversaries are likely to employ asymmetric tactics and weapons. They will seek to avoid open, force-on-force combat and lure forces into fighting in complex environments and difficult terrain. They will be opportunities based, use the indirect approach to warfare, and be difficult to template. The Army must expect simulta-

neous, noncontiguous operations across the battlespace. To prepare soldiers, leaders, and units for these conditions, the CTCs train METL-enabling units to counter threats ranging from high intensity, traditional warfighting to stability actions. Recent experience in peace support operations allows the Army to craft training for units before deploying, providing it has enough time. If the force knows the environment and has a specific scenario in advance, it can train to it. To achieve this, the Army will design a conventional threat that incorporates asymmetric means to achieve military and political objectives. By the end of fiscal year 2000, each CTC will incorporate asymmetrical capabilities into its OPFORs and scenarios, realizing that some capabilities may require additional time and resources to implement.

**Instrumentation, Simulations, and Training Aids.** Training aids, devices, simulations, and simulators are essential to achieve the goals of the CTC vision and the Army training strategy. The Army will achieve instrumentation commonality across the CTCs. This saves resources and accommodates a standard after-action review, enabling a fluid exchange of information and lessons learned. Target engagement systems must replicate the effects of future weapon systems, such as non line-of-sight, and be inextricably linked to developing the common instrumentation architecture. Enablers that facilitate a first-class training experience—common training instrumentation architecture, instrumented weapon systems, digital ranges and targets, Army Battle Command System digital linkages for observer-controllers, and instrumented maneuver live fire and urban operations—are essential to CTC relevance. The future family of simulations will support CTC training. Program managers will include CTC considerations in their system fielding plans and life cycle planning.

**Facilities.** The infrastructure to support the day-to-day operations of a CTC and the training unit is vital to the center's success and must be resourced to support the CTC training mission. This encompasses buildings to support instrumentation requirements, AAR facilities, OPFOR facilities, urban operation sites, pre-positioned fleets and their associated maintenance support requirements, logistics CSS facilities, contractor support, and land expansion. The viability of pre-positioned fleets causes concern. Aging and in varying states of condition, they must be maintained to standard to prevent lost training time. The most up-to-date equipment should be available so soldiers do not have to train down by maintaining and operating older equipment while at a CTC.

**Leader Development.** Each CTC is primarily a leader development training ground. The primary focus of the CTC program should be training and developing flexible leaders able to quickly assess ambiguous situations, make decisions, and act on them—not grading C-rating readiness. CTC leader training programs (LTP) play an important role in this process. LTP help train and certify leaders while being flexible to meet a division commander's training objectives. LTP models must be similar and expanded to ensure doctrinal standardization and to add new topics relevant to modern warfighting, such as generating combat power. LTP will cause a light coat of sweat for participants, using a combination of orders drills, the military decision making process, simulation driven exercises,

AARs, and terrain walks tailored to the unit's needs and METL assessment. During a rotation, leaders should receive feedback on their leadership and its effects on battle outcomes to leverage the environment for leader development purposes. One major end state of every training exercise will be leaders who possess a better understanding of what they need to focus on for self-development. The institution will leverage leader development opportunities in the classroom and through focused CTC training visits for selected leaders. To support leader development, each CTC requires a robust, standardized data collection capability for processing lessons learned, allowing the Army to draw meaningful conclusions from CTC training. In addition, MACOMs will develop integrated trends reversal programs using CTC-focused rotations, coordinated through TRADOC, to validate unit and proponent corrective actions across all DTLOMS domains to improve battlefield performance.

**Rigor.** The Army will not fight war plans in BCTP. War plans bring all the country's resources to the fight. In reality, units fight with what makes it into the area of operations. In addition, war plans do not permit a fair fight stressing all battlefield operating systems. Additionally, you will fight the equipment you have and would take to war at the time of the Warfighter. To stress commanders, CTCs conduct deep operations that allow for a rigorous close fight. Participants should leave a CTC experience with a heavy coat of sweat. The following are key elements of rigor:

- Training to standard.
- Full BCTP coverage.
- Doctrinally based AAR that guides leaders to accept responsibility.
- Stressing all battlefield operating systems in decisive ground combat operations.
- Free-thinking OPFOR with an equal chance to win.
- Tactical scenario where the outcome is not assured.
- Consequences of tactical decisions are fully played out.
- Restart to underscore the unit's adherence to standards and mastery of the task—not an indication of failure.

During BCTP Warfighters, command posts will be deployed tactically and displaced one time during the exercise. The time when command posts are displaced should be geared to the warfight.

**Joint Training.** The Army must maintain BCTP as its premier warfighting program to develop commanders and staffs in the art of land operations. Joint exercises are excellent vehicles for increasing joint warfighting capabilities particularly functioning as an ARFOR or ASCC. Inclusive exercises—those that link a BCTP warfighter to a joint exercise—can prepare division and corps commanders and staffs to operate within a joint force. However, embedding a BCTP warfighter in any other exercise happens only when the Army is fully satisfied it

can maintain the rigor of the BCTP program and meet training objectives. The Army will always train to its standard, while seeking to preserve the integrity of the doctrinal preparation of its leaders. Training objectives will be measurable and achievable to define success. Additionally, the Army will monitor Joint Simulations closely and ensure it is doing everything possible to support this critical simulation effort. It will continue to fund Corps Battle Simulation relevancy until Warfighter Simulation is operational.

**Deployment Training.** Deployment is a mission essential task for Army units. It fulfills the Army's vision of full spectrum strategic responsiveness. The Army will examine ways to include deployment training at tactical, operational, and strategic levels. Maneuver CTCs will continue to employ a RSO&I phase that replicates reality. Deployment training may also include a viable OPFOR that attempts to disrupt the deployment operation. BCTP will emphasize command and staff mission analysis and course of action development associated with deploying forces. The focus will be the military decision making process used to assure effective deployment of forces in the theater of operations.

### ***END STATE***

It is time to reexamine the CTC program. The CTCs must remain relevant in the 21st century. The Army must continue to a prioritization effort and determine a funding and resourcing strategy to address the most critical shortfalls—those that sustain existing training standards—and begin modernization efforts that keep pace with changes in the force. CTCs will be resourced in a way that promotes better homestation training. These efforts will be linked to the new vision and conveyed internally (inside the Army) and externally (to the public and Congress) with an active media campaign.

MACOMs will participate in quarterly training briefings (QTBs) in accordance with FM 25-100 and FM 25-101 principles. BCTP and BCBST schedules, exercise troop lists, training objectives, training plans, scenarios, METL, and variances from published guidelines will be briefed to obtain CSA approval. Additionally, MACOMs should conduct periodic CTC training briefings with division and corps commanders, their staffs, and the maneuver CTC commanders.

In conclusion, the Army will move toward instrumentation commonality across the CTCs and homestation to conserve valuable resources. CTC battlefields will replicate the effects and capabilities of current and future weapon systems. The Army will work to validate the variables that make up the new operational environment and continually update them as the world changes. At the same time, it will rewrite the CTC Master Plan as a strategic resourcing document and refine CTC scenarios to effectively replicate the 21st century threat. The CTC focus remains combat operations and the close fight. The end state will be a CTC program that is relevant to the training audience, focuses on leader development, and provides the finest possible warfighting experience—short of combat—across the full spectrum of conflict.



